



Florida House of Representatives

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STATEMENT OF REP. MCKEEL ON CRIST VETO OF TRANSPARENCY IN ELECTIONS BILL

TALLAHASSEE, FL – Representative Seth McKeel (R-Lakeland) released the following statement regarding Governor Charlie Crist’s veto of House Bill (HB) 1207, known as the Transparency in Elections bill:

“I am deeply disappointed in the action taken today by Governor Crist to veto this common-sense measure. This bill was carefully crafted to usher in a new era of transparency and openness to the political fundraising process by making political fundraising information easily accessible to the general public,” said Representative McKeel. “We all know that legislative leaders have long raised money for their respective political parties, but the current system is flawed because citizens have no easy way to see how much money has been raised or see which interests gave that money. This bill would have brought transparency to the process at a time when public confidence in the system is at an all-time low.”

Representative McKeel was the sponsor of HB 1207. The legislation was designed to bring a new level of transparency to political fundraising activity. The bill focused on increasing transparency and accessibility to the political process by establishing a new type of political party committee known as an Affiliated Party Committee (APC). The committee was to enhance the reporting of donations and expenditures by political parties and make such donations and expenditures more transparent.

Under the measure, an APC would be subject to all of the requirements and regulations of current political parties. Committees would have to report quarterly and all credit card expenditures and expense reimbursements made by these APC. The data would be itemized and posted online.

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Currently all party contributions are co-mingled and the public is unable to see who has solicited which contributions. The measure would maintain the same strict controls on in-kind contributions that are in current law, requiring that any in-kind contribution be for the direct benefit of the affiliated party committee.

The measure would also reenact and revise provisions of law related to electioneering communications and electioneering communications organizations to address concerns raised in the Broward Coalition decision. On May 22, 2009 portions of Florida law regulating electioneering communications and electioneering communications organizations were held unconstitutional by a federal judge. This ruling effectively deregulated the electioneering communications and electioneering communications organizations.

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